

**ABSTRACT**

An apparatus and method for accessing a data item from a storage system having a plurality of data storage devices are disclosed. I/O operation requests are submitted to multiple data storage devices for each data item to be accessed. The I/O operation  
5 requests are issued to copies of the data items that reside on a plurality of data storage devices. More I/O operation requests are submitted than the number of data items that are to be accessed, written, or updated.